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SUNDAY READING.

THE

Want Man turned Soldier;

OR,

The Fair Weather Christian.

A PARABLE.



Sold by J. MARSHALL,

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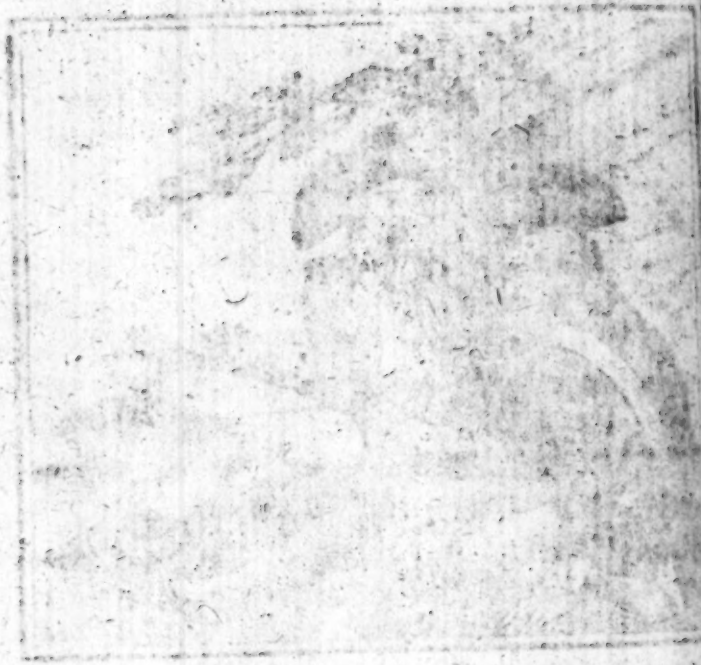
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The Servant Man, &c.

WILLIAM was a lively young servant, who lived in a *great but very irregular family*. His place was, on the whole, agreeable to him, and suited to his gay thoughtless temper. He found a plentiful table and a good cellar. There was indeed, a good deal of work to be done, though it was performed with much disorder and confusion. The family in the main were not unkind to him, though they often contradicted and crossed him, especially when things went ill with themselves. This, William never much liked, for he was always fond of having his own way. There was a merry, or rather a noisy and riotous servants' hall; disorder and quarrels are indeed the usual effects of plenty and unrestrained indulgence. The men were smart but idle, the maids were showy, but contentious, and all did pretty much as they liked for a time, but the time was commonly short. The wages were reckoned high, but they were seldom paid, and it was even said by sober people, that the master was insolvent, and never fulfilled any of his uttering engagements, or his most positive promises; but still, notwithstanding his real poverty,

things went on with just the same thoughtlessness and splendor, and neither masters or servants looked beyond the jollity of the present hour.

In this unruly family there was little church going, and still less praying at home. They pretended indeed, in a general way, to believe in the Bible, but it was only an outward profession, few of them read it at all, and even of those who did read it still fewer were governed by it. There was indeed a Bible lying on the table in the great hall, which was kept for the purpose of administering an oath, but was seldom used on any other occasion, and some of the heads of the family were of opinion that that was its only real use, as it might serve to keep the lower parts of it in order.

William, who was fond of novelty and pleasure, was apt to be negligent of the duties of the household. He used to stay out on his errands, and one of his favorite amusements was going to the parade to see the soldiers exercise. He saw with envy how smartly they were dressed, listened with rapture to the music, and fancied that a soldier had nothing to do but to walk to and fro in a certain regular order, to go through a little easy exercise, in short to live without fighting, fatigue, or danger.

"O," said he, whenever he was affronted at home, "what a fine thing it must be to be a soldier! to be so well dressed, to have nothing to do but to move to the pleasant sound of fife and drum, and to have so many people come to look at one, and admire one. *O it must be a fine thing to be a soldier!*"

Yet when the vexation of the moment was over, he found so much ease and diversion in his master's house, so suited to his low taste and sensual ap-

that he thought no more of the matter. He forgot the glories of a soldier, and eagerly returned to all the mean gratifications of the kitchen. His evil habits were but little attended to by those with whom he lived; his faults, among which were lying and swearing, were not often corrected by the family, who had little objection to those sins, which only offended God and did not much affect their own interest or property. And except that William was obliged to work rather more than he liked he found little, while he was young and healthy, that was very disagreeable in this service. So he went on, still thinking however, when things went a little cross, "what a strange thing it was to be a soldier!" and at last one day as he was waiting at dinner, he had the misfortune to let fall a china dish, and broke it all to pieces. It was a curious dish, much valued by the family as they pretended; this family were indeed apt to set a false fantastic value on things, and not to estimate them by their real worth. The heads of the family, who had generally been rather patient and good-humoured with William as I said before, for these vices, which though offensive to good did not touch their own pocket, now flew out into a violent passion with him, called him a thousand hard names, and even threatened to horse-whip him for his shameful negligence. William, in a great fright, for he was a sad coward at bottom, ran directly out of the house to avoid the threatened punishment, and happening just at that very time to pass by the parade where the soldiers chanced to be then exercising, his resolution was taken in a moment. He instantly determined to be no more a slave, as he called it; he would return no more to be subject to the humours

of a tyrannical family; no, he was resolved to be free, or at least, if he must serve he would serve a master but the King.

William, who had now and then happened to hear from the accidental talk of the soldiers, that those who served the *great family* he had lived with, were slaves to their tyranny and vices, had also heard in the same casual manner, that the service of the *King* was *perfect freedom*. Now he had taken it into his head to hope that this might be a freedom to do evil, or at least to do nothing, so he thought it was the only place in the world to suit him.

A fine likely young fellow as William was, he had no great difficulty to get enlisted. The few fellows who were soon settled, he received the bounty money as eagerly as it was offered, took the oaths of allegiance, and was joined to the regiment, and heartily welcomed by his new comrades. He was the happiest fellow alive. All was smooth and calm. The day happened to be very fine, and therefore William always reckoned upon a fine day. The scene was gay and lively, the music cheerful, he found the exercise very easy, and he thought there was little more expected from him.

He soon began to flourish away in his talk; and when he met with any one of his old fellow servants, he fell a prating about marches and counter-marches, and blockades, and battles, and sieges, and blood and death, and triumphs, and victories, all at random, for these were words and phrases he had picked up without at all understanding what he said. He had no knowledge, and therefore he had no modesty, he had no experience, and therefore he had no fears.

All seemed to go on swimmingly, for he had

no trial. He began to think with triumph what mean life he had escaped from in the old quarrel, the family, and what a happy, honourable life he would have in the army. *O there was no life like the life of a soldier!*

In a short time, however, war broke out, his regiment was one of the first which was called out to actual and hard service. As William was the first raw of all the recruits he was the first to murmur at the difficulties and hardships, the cold and danger, the fatigue and danger of being a soldier. The watchings, and perils, and trials, and hardships, and difficulties he now thought attended a military life! "Surely," said he, "I could never have suspected all this misery when I used to see the men on the parade in our town.

He now found, when it was too late, that all the old-days he used to attend, all the evolutions and exercises which he had observed the soldiers to go through in the calm times of peace and safety, were only meant to fit, train, and qualify them, for the actual service which they were now sent out to perform by the command of the *King*.

The truth is, William often complained when there was no real hardship to complain of; for the common troubles of life fell out pretty much like to the *great family* which William had left, and the soldiers in the *King's army*. But the spirit of obedience, discipline, and self-denial of the latter seemed hardships to one of William's loose turn of mind. When he began to murmur some good old soldier clapped him on the back, saying, "cheer up, it is a kingdom you are to strive for, if we do not, henceforth there is laid up for us a great reward, we have the *King's word* for it man." Wil.

William observed that to those who truly believed in their labours were as nothing, but he himself was not at the bottom believe it; and it was observed of all the soldiers who failed, the true cause was that they did not really believe the King's promise. He was surprised to see the then soldiers, who used to bluster, and boast, and deride the slanders of the enemy now began to fall away; while such as faithfully obeyed the king's orders, and believed in his word, were sustained in the hour of need. Those who had trusted in their own strength all fainted in the slightest attack, while those who had put on the armour of the king's providing, the sword and the shield, and the helmet, and the breast-plate, and whose feet were shod according to order, endured hardships as good soldiers, and were enabled to fight the good fight.

An engagement was expected immediately. The men were ordered to prepare for battle. While the rest of the corps were so preparing, William's whole thoughts were bent on contriving how he might desert. But alas! he was watched on all sides, he could not possibly devise any means of escape. The danger increased every moment; the battle came on. William, who had been so sure and confident before he entered, flinched in the moment of trial, while his more quiet and less boastful comrades prepared boldly to do their duty. William looked about on all sides, and saw that there was no eye upon him, for he did not know that the King's eye was every where at once. At last he thought he spied a chance of escaping from the enemy, but from his own army. While he was endeavouring to escape, a ball from the opposite camp took off his leg. As he fell, the

which broke from his waist, "while I was
 my duty I was preserved, in the duty of a soldier
 I am wounded." He lay expiring every
 moment to be trampled to death, but he felt the
 pain was a little over, he was taken off the
 by some of his own party, laid in a place of
 safety, and left to himself, after his wound was
 dressed, and the officer who gave notice of the
 skirmish, for it proved nothing more or less
 proven. The greater part of the regiment es-
 caped in safety, while the few who fellly re-
 fused to follow their duty. William in the mean-
 time suffered cruelly both in mind and body. The
 pains of a wounded soldier, he added the dis-
 honour of a coward, and the infamy of a deserter.
 "O," cried he, "why was I such a fool as to leave
 the great family I lived in where there was meat
 and drink enough and to spare, only on account of
 a little quarrel? I might have made up that with
 William as we had done our former quarrels. Why
 did I leave a life of ease and pleasure, where I had
 a little rub now and then, for a life of daily
 discipline and constant danger? Why did I turn
 soldier? O, what a miserable animal is a soldier!"
 As he was sitting in this weak and disabled con-
 dition, uttering the above complaints, he observed
 a venerable old officer, with thin grey locks on his
 head, and on his face deep wrinkles engraved by
 age, and many an honest scar inflicted by war.
 William had heard this old officer highly com-
 mended for his extraordinary courage and conduct
 in battle, and in peace he used to see him cool
 collected, devoutly employed in reading and
 writing in the interval of more active duties. He
 could not help comparing this officer with himself.

"I," said he, "flashed and flew back, and
even have deserted in the moment of pain,
now in silence, I have no consolation in the
of repose and safety, and I would not fight them, I
not pray now. O why would I ever think of be-
a soldier? He then began afresh to sweep the
ment, and he groaned, so loud that he drew
notice of the officer who came up to him, he
sat down by him, took him by the hand, and
quired with as much affection as if he had been
brother; what was the matter with him, and his
particular distress, more than the common sor-
of war? it was which drew from him such
groans?" "I know, something of surgery," said
he, "let me examine your wound and assist
with such little comforts as I can."

William at once saw the difference betwixt
the soldiers in the King's army, and the people
in the *great family*; the latter commonly without
their kindness in sickness and trouble when
wanted, which was just the very time when
others came forward to assist. He told him of
his little history, the manner of his living in
great family, the trifling cause of his quarrelling
with it, the slight ground of his entering
the King's service. "Sir," said he, "I quar-
relled with the family, and I thought I was at
fit for the army: I did not know the qualifications
it required. I had not reckoned on discipline
and hardships, and self-denial. I liked well
to sing a loyal song, or drink the King's health,
but I find I do not relish working and fighting
him, though I rashly promised even to lay
my life for his service if called upon, when I see
the bounty money and the oath of allegi-

I find I cannot be a soldier, and so I have
 I was in the very act of deserting when
 I stopped short by the cannon ball, so that I
 am free of the guilt of deserting, and the misery of hav-
 ing lost my leg into the bargain. The officer then replied, "your state is that of
 a worldly, intelligent man. The great family
 served as a just picture of the world. The
 world promises to those who are willing to
 do its work, high pay, but the payment is attended
 with much disappointment; nay, the world, like
 a great family, is in itself insolvent, and of its
 nature incapable of making good the prom-
 ises, and of paying the high rewards, which it
 holds out to tempt its credulous followers. The
 worldly world, like your family, cares little for
 church, and still less for prayers; and considers
 the Bible rather as an instrument to make an oath
 binding, in order to keep the vulgar in obedi-
 ence, than as containing in itself a perfect rule of
 faith and practice, and as a rule-deed to heaven.
 The generality of men love the world as you did
 your service, while it smiles upon them, and gives
 them easy work, and plenty of meat and drink; but
 as soon as it begins to cross and contradict them,
 they get out of humour with it, just as you did
 your service. They then think its drudgery
 too great, its rewards low. They find out that it is
 false in its expectations from them, and slack in
 its payments to them. And they begin to fancy
 that because they do not hear religious people mut-
 ter (as they do) that there must be some happiness
 in religion. The world, which takes no account of

their deeper sins at length bring them into
 dis for some act of imprudence, just as you
 overlooked your lying and swearing, but
 ened to drub you for breaking a china dish,
 is the judgment of the world, in particu-
 bears with those who only break the law
 God, but severely punishes the smallest
 goned by which property is injured. The
 sooner pardons the breaking ten command-
 of God than even a china dish of us eve-
 After some cross of opposition, worldly men
 I said before, begin to think how much concern
 cheerfulness they remember to have seen in reli-
 people. They therefore begin to fancy that
 gion must be an easy and delightful, as well
 good thing. They have heard that "her
 are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths
 peace;" and they persuade themselves, that
 this is meant worldly pleasures and
 peace. They resolve at length to try it, to
 their back upon the world, to engage in
 service of God and turn christians; just as
 resolved to leave your old service, to enter
 the service of the King and turn soldier. Be-
 you quitted your place in a passion, so they
 the world in a huff. They do not count the
 They do not calculate upon the darling sins, the
 hitual pleasures, the ease and vanities which
 undertake by their new engagements to renou-
 any more than you counted what indulgences
 were going to give up when you quitted the
 ries and idleness of your place to enlist in the
 dier's warfare. They have, as I said, seen
 rians cheerful, and they mistook the ground
 their cheerfulness; they fancied it arose not
 cause, through grace they had conquered diffi-

but because they had no difficulties in their
 age. They fancied that religion found the road
 smooth, whereas it only helps to bear with a rough
 without complaint. They do not know that
 the Christians are of good cheer, not because the
 world is free from tribulation, but because Christ
 their captain has "overcome the world." But the
 religious man, who has only seen the outside of a
 Christian in his worldly intercourse, knows little of
 secret conflicts, his trials, his self-denials, his
 warfare with the world without, and with his own
 corrupt desires within.

The irreligious man quarrels with the world, on
 the such occasion as you did with your place,
 now puts on the outward forms and ceremonies
 of religion, and assumes the badges of Chris-
 tianity, just as you were struck with the shows of
 a field-day; just as you were pleased with the
 music and the marching, and put on the cockade and
 a red coat. All seems smooth for a little while,
 he goes through the outward exercises of a Chris-
 tian, a degree of credit attends his new profes-
 sion, but he never suspects there is either diffi-
 culty or discipline attending it; he fancies reli-
 gion is a thing for talking about, and not a thing
 for the heart and the life. He never suspects that
 the psalm-singing he joins in, and the sermons he
 hears, and the other means he is using, are only
 the exercises and the evolutions of the soldiers,
 to fit and prepare him for actual service; and that
 these means are no more religion itself, than the
 exercises and evolutions of your parade were real
 warfare.

At length some trial arises. This nominal Chris-
 tian is called to differ from the world in some

great point: something happens, which may be at his command, or his credit, or liberality. He feels his zeal for religion, just as the view of engagement cooled your courage as a soldier. He finds he was only angry with the world, was not tired of it. He was out of humour with the world, not because he had been through vanity and emptiness, but because the world was out of humour with him. He finds that it is no easy thing to be a fair-weather Christian, where there is nothing to be done, and combat where there is nothing to be feared. Difficulties unmask him to others; temptations unmask to himself; he discovers, that though he is a professor, he is no Christian; just as you found out that your red coat and your cockade, your shoulder-knot, and your musket, did not prevent you from being a coward.

Your misery in the military life, like that of a nominal Christian, arose from your love of ease, your cowardice, and your self-ignorance, you rushed into a new way of life, without trying to acquire any qualification for it. A total change of habit and temper were necessary for your new calling. With new views and new principles the soldier's life would have been not only easy but delightful to you. But while with a new profession you retained your old nature, it is no wonder all discipline seemed intolerable to you.

The true Christian, like the brave soldier, supported under dangers by a strong faith in the fruits of that victory for which he fights, for safety and peace. But, alas! the pleasures of this world are present and visible; the kingdom and the crown for which he strives are remote.

2. Brown, Geo. G. (George V. H.)
Brown, Geo. H. (George V. H.)
Brown, Geo. H. (George V. H.)



A List of the Tracts published during the Year
 Mary Wood the Housemaid.
 Shoemakers. Part II, III. and IV.
 Charles Jones the Footman.
 The Cheapside Apprentice.
 The Gamester.
 Betty Brown, the St. Giles's Orange Girl.
 Farmers. Part III. IV. and V.
 Black Giles the Poacher. Part I. and II.

SUNDAY READINGS.

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 On Carrying Religion into Business.
 Look at Home.
 The Grand Affizes.
 Explanation of the Nature of Baptism.
 Prayers.
 The Valley of Tears.

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